Distr.
LIMITED

IPCT.153(SPEC.)
18 March 1992

UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fourth Meeting of the Advisory Group
of the Industrial and Technological Information Bank (INTIB)

Vienna, Austria, 26-28 November 1991

REPORT*

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* This document has not been edited.

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I. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Advisory Group reviewed the activities of INTIB, especially during the last 2 years and acknowledged their achievements in implementing the programmes recommended by previous INTIB Advisory Group Meetings. It also noted INTIB's new initiatives to meet the information demand of member countries. This has made it possible to:

1. Set-up a global network consisting of 4 regional and 75 national focal points of INTIB. In addition, sectoral networks for information on chemicals, energy and the environment as well as small and medium enterprises were established;

2. Strengthen INTIB as the centre of the global networking interaction among focal points dealing with industrial and technological information. INTIB successfully continued its past activities; running an inquiry service, disseminating information, acting as a clearing house, and generating data bases;

3. Examine the available information technologies, identify those most suitable for the individual needs of developing countries and implement computer linkages between INTIB, RFP and NFPs;

4. Develop and implement the human resource development programme for upgrading the skills of INTIB network staff in developing countries to access and use the technological information;

5. Establish co-operation with commercial database producers resulting in the production and sale of value-added information products;

6. Catalyse the generation of technical co-operation projects in various industrial sectors through the operation of the enquiry service;

7. Establish a sound basis for the future development of INTIB.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. INTIB should develop a strategy for its future activities, taking due account of the importance of:

1. The developments and changes in Eastern Europe, parts of Africa and Asia, to move from a centrally planned to a market oriented economy and to re-orientate industry accordingly.

2. The need to establish a non-hierarchical de-centralised network of organizations which can collect and provide information to SMEs at local level as a sub-system within INTIB. Separate technical focal points/co-ordination points should be established to facilitate the transfer of knowledge to SMEs.

3. Marketing information products and services world-wide and publishing guidelines for this purpose.

4. Assessing quantitatively through case studies the value and effectiveness of information provided by INTIB, particularly in developing countries.

5. Assisting the establishment of information business centres to hasten the introduction of new and environmentally sound technologies in the developing world. A feasibility study for this purpose could be initiated.

6. The further development of telecommunications support for developing countries, with special reference to Africa. UNIDO should reallocate resources to achieve these objectives.

7. A multi-lingual approach for access and exchange of information, especially between developing countries and for use by SMEs. A case study for this purpose should also be initiated.

8. Continuing to support annual workshops/training seminars, having included basic training.

9. Establishing new National Focal Points in new countries and transition economies.

B. The TECHMART initiative was welcomed as an effective new method for generating current technology and business opportunities, leading to technology transfer, investment and technical co-operation projects. Another TECHMART event was proposed to be held in 1992, either in Africa or Latin America.

C. The Advisory Group was informed of the outcome of the Experts Group Meeting on Techno-Economic Intelligence (INTELL). It was agreed that workshops should be organized to explore the possibilities so as to add value to the INTIB information activities taking account of the findings of the INTELL meeting.

D. In the context of the new INTIB approach on referral system the French Pilot Directory (Directory of French Sources of Industrial and Technological Information) was welcomed as a very useful publication. It was recommended that UNIDO/INTIB should evaluate the directory, incorporate improvements, prepare a schedule for world-wide production, paying regard to costs, marketing and quality.

II. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The United Nations General Assembly passed its Resolution 31/183 on the establishment of a network for the exchange of technological information, particularly para 9, concerning the establishment of the Industrial and Technological Information Bank (INTIB) in UNIDO, and UNIDO Industrial Development Board (IDB) Resolution 47(XI) as well as the Vienna programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development also stressed the importance of strengthening of the national technological information capabilities of the developing countries.

In this connection, UNIDO has carried out a number of action-oriented activities to facilitate and accelerate greater flow of information to INTIB users.

The Third Meeting of the Advisory Group of the INTIB was organized by the UNIDO Secretariat at Vienna, Austria, from 13-17 March 1989. Seventeen advisers, in their personal capacity, from 15 countries participated in the meeting.

The meeting discussed the following four themes:

(1) Review INTIB's activities following its re-orientation and approval of Industrial and Technological Information Programme;

(2) Operation of INTIB - Regional and National Focal Points Network, modus operandi for focal points;

(3) Coordination and cooperation between INTIB and other UN and external data bases;

(4) Review INTIB's human resource development programme based on concrete proposals from various member countries;

and made, inter alia, conclusions and recommendations as follows:

- Member States may consider ways to improve awareness of the importance of industrial information in the development process.

- Technical cooperation projects should be initiated for the improvement of INTIB information activities. Important ones are:

  - Model for better exploitation and marketing of local information resources;
  - Study of inter-linkages between market, small and medium enterprises and research;
  - Availability of business information for small and medium enterprises;
  - UNIDO/INTIB referral system and networking;

- Establishment of advisory services for helping NFPs and end-users in the handling of industrial, technological and commercial information.

- UNIDO should establish and/or strengthen linkages with other international, regional and national organizations engaged in similar activities through the exchange of material and expertise and the implementation of complementary programmes and projects.

- Existing information resources should be better exploited and made available to a wider range of users.

- Human resources must be developed for the specialized jobs in the field of industrial, technological and business.

Within this context, during the last two years, UNIDO has reoriented the activities of INTIB. They include:

- Development and operation of Industrial and Technological Information Bank focal points networking system; convening regional and national workshops for INTIB national focal points; promote direct contacts of technology suppliers and seekers through meetings, negotiations, product catalogues, exhibitions of diagrams, pictures and small sample products.

- Development and use of INTIB databases and on-line systems: Establishment of on-line linkages, in particular, remote access and electronic mailing, with INTIB and other public domain and commercially available information sources; training of staff of INTIB focal points and other network participants in accessing the system.

- Generation and dissemination of industrial information and promotion of INTIB networking system: Issuance of INTIB promotional and teaching materials; Quarterly INTIB Newsletter; Production and dissemination of INTIB databases in electronic media.

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the Fourth Meeting of the Advisory Group of the INTIB is to bring together experts to review the elements of the programme to re-orient the activities of INTIB in the light of the conclusions of the Third INTIB Advisory Group Meeting.

The meeting will discuss the following themes:

(1) INTIB Programme - Review and Vision for the Future

- . Regional and National Focal Points Networking System
- . Sectoral Networks
  - Chemical Network
  - Energy and Environment Network
  - Small and Medium Industries Network
- . Databases Development
- . Communications
- . Human Resources Development
- . Publications Programme
- . Technical Cooperation Projects

(2) Techno-economic Intelligence in INTIB Operation

(3) Referral System - INTIB Approach, including development of Multilingual Information Exchange Tool for Networking

(4) Marketing Information Services and Products

(5) Technology Market (TECHMART)

ORGANIZATION:

The Advisory Group Meeting was attended by 25 participants from various member countries, international organizations, and UNIDO consultants (see Annex I.).

Delivering the welcome address, the Deputy-Director General, Department for Industrial Promotion, Consultations and Technology, described the basic thrust and strategy of UNIDO and more particularly the role that is envisaged for industrial and technological information. He noted that the activities of development organizations in the production and development of information make them major actors in the development of local information industry capabilities. He stated that policies needed formulating to encourage the growth of this industry as a component of the economy through the establishment of a "knowledge-based development strategy". This, he suggested, was particularly timely, given the recent reorientation of many countries from centrally planned to market economies.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The meeting was invited to elect a Chairman and a Rapporteur. The meeting unanimously elected:

1. Chairman: Professor Adam Wysocki, Institute for Scientific, Technical and Economic Information, Warsaw, Poland.

2. Rapporteur: Mr. Mark Furneaux, Materials Information, The Institute of Metals, London, United Kingdom.

III. WORKING SESSIONS

The UNIDO-INTIB Secretariat paper traced the development of INTIB, its present status and future plans. The second paper examined the needs for an information network for small and medium enterprises (SMEI-NET) and suggested a conceptual and operational framework. The role of marketing in the design, implementation and continued existence of any information product for services was highlighted. A paper was then presented examining the desirability of establishing regional business information centres to hasten the introduction of new technologies in the developing world.

The second session began with a presentation about the importance of techno-economic intelligence (INTELL) in the developed world and its potential value to developing countries. A summary of the findings of the INTELL group were presented. The paper on TECHMART outlined the needs for and benefits of a technology market to bring together buyers and sellers of technology (TECHMART), examined the success of earlier non-UNIDO activities in this field and described the preparation for the first UNIDO TECHMART in Beijing.

Presentations followed on the approaches adopted by INTIB to telecommunications between focal points, and within the office environment, and to the capabilities offered world-wide by the SPACOM and General Electric Communications Services. The next paper examined the need for a multilingual approach to technological information processing and identified the benefits of such a system.

In the last session, INTIB's approach for a new referral system was presented. Finally, a paper on human resource development in information technology applications was discussed, taking account of recent INTIB experience.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

After detailed discussions, the meeting adopted the Report. The meeting made a strong recommendation to UNIDO and the Member States for early implementation of the activities suggested at the meeting.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The meeting expressed its deep appreciation for the efforts made by UNIDO for the organization of the meeting and offered special thanks to UNIDO for providing excellent host facilities.

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ANNEX II: MEETING PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 26 November 1991

10.00 - 11.00	- Registration
11.00 - 11.30	- Opening session Welcome speech Mr. Alberto Araoz, Deputy Director General, Department for Industrial Promotion, Consultations and Technology, UNIDO
11.30 - 11.45	- Election of Chairman and Rapporteur
14.00 - 15.00	- Presentation(s) INTIB Programme - Review and Vision for the Future UNIDO Secretariat paper by Mr. V. Podshibyakin and Prof. R. Seiful-Mulukov Discussion
15.00 - 15.45	- Small and Medium Enterprises Information Network (SMEI-Net): A Conceptual and Operational Framework by Prof. K.K. George
16.00 - 16.45	- Marketing Information Services and Products by Mr. M. Furneaux
16.45 - 17.30	- Proposal for Regional Business Information Centre by Mr. C.S. Sydykov Discussion
17.30 hrs.	- Demonstration of Local Area Network by Mr. S. Schubert

Wednesday, 27 November 1991

09.30 - 10.30	- Presentation(s) Techno-economic Intelligence in INTIB Operation by Mr. J. Cubillo Discussion
10.30 - 11.00	- Technology Market (TECHMART) by Mr. B. Padgett Discussion
11.15 - 11.45	- INTIB Telecommunications by Ms. J. Ralston Discussion
11.45 - 12.15	- SPACOM Communications Services by Mrs. Susanne Just Discussion
12.15 - 12.45	- General Electric Communications Services by Mr. E. Haberbusch Discussion
14.00 - 15.00	- Multilingual Information Exchange Tool for Networking by Mr. C. Galinsky Discussion
15.15	- Demonstration(s) in Room 1924 SPACOM GE Mailbox Energy and Environment Databases by Mr. Pembleton

Thursday, 28 November 1991

09.30 - 10.30	-	Presentation(s)
		Referral System: A New INTIB Approach by Prof. J. Michel
		Discussion
10.30 - 11.00		Proposal for Human Resources Development Programme in Information Technology by Mr. Y. Savostisky
		Discussion
11.15 - 12.30	-	Round table discussion
		How should INTIB function in the future?
14.30 - 17.00	-	Adoption of the report
		Closing session

ANNEX III: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. Aide-Mémoire.
2. Meeting Programme.
3. List of Participants.
4. INTIB PROGRAMME: Review and Vision for the Future (UNIDO's Paper).
5. Small and Medium Enterprises Information Network (SMEI-Net) - A Conceptual and Operational Framework, (prepared by K. George).
6. Marketing Information Services and Products (prepared by Mark Furneaux).
7. The Development of International Information Business Center in Kyrghyzstan, (prepared by K. Sydykov).
8. Techno-Economic Intelligence (INTELL): What is in it for Developing Countries?, (prepared by Julio Cubillo).
9. UNIDO TECHMART, (prepared by Brian Padgett).
10. INTIB TELECOMMUNICATIONS, (prepared by J. Ralston).
11. The Referral System: A new INTIB Approach, (prepared by Jean Michel).
12. Workshops on the Use of Modern Hardware/Software for Access to Technological Databases, (prepared by Y. Savostisky).